

Application No. 10/014,679
Response After Final "B" Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 dated September 9, 2004
Reply to FINAL Office Action mailed June 9, 2004

Response Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 3663

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Examiner's Final Office Action mailed June 9, 2004. Claim 23 is cancelled and claims 24, 30-31 are amended. No new claims are added. Claims 1-22 and 24-34 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. In addition, Applicants request that the Examiner carefully review any references discussed below to ensure that Applicants' understanding and discussion of the references, if any, is consistent with the Examiner's understanding.

I. PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

The Examiner rejects claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Dijaili, et al.* Claim 23 is cancelled without prejudice, and the rejection is now moot.

II. Allowed Subject Matter

The Examiner's allowance of claims 1-22 and 32-34 is appreciated. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the careful review and allowance of those claims.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 24-31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicants have rewritten claim 24 in an independent format so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim. In particular, the scope of claim 24 has not been narrowed in any way so as to overcome any prior art, but has merely been rewritten in an independent format. As acknowledged by the Examiner, that claim is patentably distinct from the prior art, and is now

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in a condition for allowance. Moreover, for at least the same reason, claims now depending from claim 24 – namely, claims 25-31 – are also in a condition for allowance.

In summary, claims 1-22 and 24-34 are now pending in view of the above amendments, and all are patentably distinct from the prior art. Allowance of each of these claims is respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 9 day of September, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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